

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The invention provides a user authentication method that allows selection of a level of user authentication for a remote control apparatus in accordance with an importance of the device to be controlled, and a remote control apparatus using this method. If a user inputs information for user authentication after having inputted a command for control of a controlled device, this information is compared with the corresponding user authentication information stored. If the user authentication is successful, it is determined whether a secondary authentication is required. If a secondary authentication is required, authentication data, as well as control data corresponding to the user's command, are transmitted to the controlled device. The controlled device operates in accordance with the received control data, if the authentication with the received authentication data was successful. The invention allows individual setting of a communication device for each controlled device. It is also possible that data for secondary authentication is transmitted first to a controlled device, and then, controlled data is transmitted after the secondary authentication is completed successfully.